



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Bryce Canyon National Park

August 2008

P.O. Box 170001
Bryce Canyon, UT 84717

435 834-5322 phone
435 834-4102 fax
www.nps.gov/brca

Bryce Canyon National Park Fire Management



Bryce Canyon Completes Residential Prescribed Fire (Rx)

Burn Conducted During Height of Fire Season

Normally, we think of most prescribed burns occurring during the shoulder seasons of spring and fall when resources are available and not on suppression assignments. Not often does management attempt prescribed fires during the normal burning season due to risks associated with resource availability. But recently Bryce Canyon National Park did just that when the the decision was made to ignite the Residential Rx during the period when fires would have naturally burned to achieve benefits for the ecosystem.

The Residential Rx Burn Unit is located in the northern portion of Bryce Canyon near the park entrance station, visitor center and residential areas. This project was designed to reduce the wildland fire hazard to Bryce Canyon's residential and maintenance areas and other developments in the northern portion of the park. Secondary goals were the maintenance of mountain meadows and the continued restoration of ponderosa pine forest communities.

This third entry burn (the area was treated in 1991 and 1999) treated approximately 475 areas in two phases. The first, and most difficult, phase was a 50 acre blacklining operation along the park's main highway and around park residences. The second phase was hand igniting the interior of the rest of the burn unit. Weather conditions before and during the fire were closely monitored to ensure that the burn occurred under a predetermined set of conditions.

This project was carried out with close support and cooperation from the Dixie National Forest whose lands surround most of the park. This project was truly an interagency effort with resources from the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management all helping out to manage the fire.

The lack of fire in Bryce Canyon (due mainly to past suppression efforts) has contributed to high fuel loadings and a change in forest structure. Prescribed fire is a treatment to reverse these changes brought on by fire exclusion. The policy of using fire as a tool will help decrease risks to life, property and resources and will help perpetuate the values for which Bryce Canyon National Park was established.



Fire Information officers were on hand to answer questions for park visitors.



Classic ponderosa pine underburn.